

tory of his own see. In crossing the corner of Suffolk that lies between Cambridge and Thetford, he met, at Icklingham, Lord Thomas Morley with three captive rebels. Morley did not dare on his own responsibility to execute the rioters without special command from the King. The Bishop, who had no such fears, took over the prisoners, and when he reached Wy-mondham, had them hanged on his own authority (*see map*, p. 254). The action had the desired effect. * In the same place many malefactors remained, who, terrified by dread of death, did not dare to proceed further in the insurrection/ The incident illustrates the helplessness displayed by the aristocracy in the provinces, and points to the need of some royal proclamation directed against the rebellion. The Bishop seems to have been one of the very few who dared to act before such authority came down from London, and who had not been deceived by the rumour, which the rioters assiduously fostered, that the King countenanced the Rising. Bishop Spencer pushed on to Norwich, entered it and re-established order in the city. He then called out the forces of the place marched on to North Walsham, where the rebels were collected and broke up their assembly. The resistance proved halfhearted and the victory complete. The Rising in East Anglia, which had been very general and quite unopposed, began about June 15, and collapsed after little more than a week, under the first blows struck by an unflinching hand.¹

Meanwhile the King had begun his Bloody Assize in Essex. Tressilian, appointed Chief Justice in place of the murdered Cavendish, was the Jeffreys of the occasion, and Buckingham the Kirke. The Earl went in advance to break the resistance of those bands of rebels which held together, and the Judge tried all who were brought into the King's headquarters. At Waltham the King had an interview with a deputation of peasants, at which he finally threw off the mask. * Serfs you are, and serfs you will remain,' was his answer, when they pleaded the charters of liberation from bondage which he himself had granted. The messengers retired to their main body, but the Earl of Buckingham followed hard upon them, broke up the camp at Billericay with great slaughter, and pushed on to Colchester. A division of lances was sent

¹ Powell, 38-40 ; Wals., ii. 6-8 ; Knlghton, ii. 140-1,